

Title IID-EWITT TQ

with Mickie Quinn of Mighty Productions

Welcome

ThinkQuest has a rich history that spans the globe. Through the power of technology, students and teachers have expanded their worlds, developed important connections, reached out to the professional world, and have made important steps in their own learning through project-based methods.

History

- 1996- ThinkQuest Internet Challenge launched for North American schools.
- 1997- TQ Challenge goes global- students connect worldwide to collaborate.
- 1998- ThinkQuest partners in 66 countries, 100,000 participants worldwide.
- 2002- Oracle “Help us Help” Foundation assume responsibility for worldwide program.
- 2002- TQNYC is launched specifically to address needs in NYC schools.
- 2009- TQNYC has served over 23,000 students and 1,500 teachers in 500 New York City schools. Due to funding issues, TQNYC closes its doors.
- 2010- NYC teachers keep the project alive in their classrooms.
- 2011- Oracle brings the Internet Challenge back to ThinkQuest.com

Mission

Students work with coach to develop an interesting topic and publish a website designed to engage other students in learning about the topic. Students work in groups of 3-6 and commit to seeing the project to fruition. Students learn collaboration and communication skills in addition to enhancing their literacy and computer abilities.

New Learning Models

- Real World Collaboration
- Student Directed, Project Based Learning
- More than “Media Transfer”
- Student as Knowledge Producer & Expert
- Prepares Student with Information-Age Skills
- Teacher as Coach, Mentor, Facilitator, and Learner
- Literacy & Research Skills
- Project Based Learning
- Technology Integration
- Communication
- Align with Standards

Topics should be exciting!

- Find a new way to present an academic topic
- Give an ‘outside interest’ an educational twist
- Choose a ‘hot topic’ for students to explore and debate
- Turn a class trip or project into a website
- Find a community project, issue, charity to align a project to

Created by EWITT & Mighty Productions 2010. Cannot be reproduced without permission by Title IID.

Connecting to Standards and Professional Goals

- How does this project meet ELA standards?
- What are your professional goals?
- What goals do you have for your students?

ELA STANDARDS PHILOSOPHY

- Recognizes that English language arts learners must be exposed to regular and varied opportunities to read.
- Guides students to read a minimum of 25 books or the equivalent, per year, across all content areas and all standards.
- Guides students to write at least 1,000 words, per month, across all content areas and all standards.
- Guides students to listen and to speak on a daily basis.
- Recognizes that teachers in all content areas share responsibility for the development of reading, writing, listening, and speaking competencies.
- Supports the recursive nature of language arts development across the continuum, from pre-kindergarten through grade 12.
- Affirms that all students are able to achieve competency in the presence of skilled instruction, adequate time for learning, varied and/or specialized resources, and additional support as needed.
- Recognizes that equity in and access to technology and other resources must be ensured at State, regional, and local levels and enhances the development of critical literacy competencies.
- Reflects an understanding of the developmental needs of students as they work to achieve competency in language arts.
- Focuses on students as active learners, responsible for and knowledgeable about their own learning.

Grades 7–8 Core Performance Indicators

Reading

- Identify a purpose for reading
- Adjust reading rate according to the purpose for reading
- Use word recognition and context clues to read fluently
- Determine the meaning of unfamiliar words by using context clues, a dictionary, a glossary, and structural analysis (i.e., looking at roots, prefixes, and suffixes of words)
- Distinguish between dictionary meaning and implied meaning of the author's words
- Identify transitional words or phrases, such as furthermore or in comparison, that provide clues to organizational formats such as compare/contrast
- Use knowledge of punctuation to assist in comprehension

- Apply corrective strategies, such as discussing with others and monitoring for misunderstandings, to assist in comprehension
- Seek opportunities for improvement in reading comprehension by choosing more challenging writers, topics, and texts
- Maintain a personal reading list to reflect reading accomplishments

Listening

- Adapt listening strategies to different purposes and settings
- Listen respectfully and responsively
- Identify own purpose for listening
- Recognize content-specific vocabulary or terminology

Speaking

- Respond respectfully
- Initiate communication with peers and adults in the school and local community
- Adapt language and presentational features for the audience and purpose
- Use language and grammar appropriate to the purpose for speaking
- Use volume, tone, pitch, and rate appropriate to content and audience
- Use effective nonverbal communication
- Use visual aids to enhance the presentation
- Establish and maintain eye contact with audience

Writing

- Understand the purpose for writing; the purpose may be to explain, describe, narrate, persuade, or express feelings
- Identify the intended audience
- Use tone and language appropriate to audience and purpose
- Use prewriting activities (e.g., brainstorming, note taking, freewriting, outlining, and paragraphing)
- Use the writing process (e.g., prewriting, drafting, revising, proofreading, and editing)
- Write clear, concise, and varied sentences, developing a personal writing style and voice
- Observe rules of punctuation, italicization, capitalization, and spelling as follows:
 - o Punctuate correctly simple/compound/complex sentences, undivided/divided direct quotations, exact words from sources (quotations), titles of articles/literary works, and business letters
 - o Use italics and underlining for titles
 - o Capitalize proper nouns, such as geographical names, academic courses, and organizations
 - o spell correctly commonly misspelled words, homonyms, and content-area vocabulary
- Use correct grammatical construction in
 - o Parts of speech, such as nouns; adjectives and adverbs (comparative/superlative); pronouns (indefinite/nominative/objective); conjunctions (coordinating/subordinating); prepositions and prepositional phrases; interjections; and conjunctions to connect ideas

Created by EWITT & Mighty Productions 2010. Cannot be reproduced without permission by Title IID.

- Simple/compound/complex sentences; note especially subject-verb agreement, infinitives and participles, clear antecedents for pronouns, placement of modifiers, and use active voice
- Use signal/transitional words or phrases, such as first, next, and in addition, to produce organized, cohesive texts
- Use dictionaries, thesauruses, and style manuals
- Use computer software (e.g., word processing, import graphics) to support the writing process
- Write for an authentic purpose, including publication

Grades 9–12 Core Performance Indicators

Reading

- Identify the purpose for reading
- Adjust the reading rate according to the purpose for reading
- Determine the meaning of unfamiliar words by using classroom and other resources
- Distinguish between dictionary meaning and implied meaning of the writer's words
- Follow the logic of compound/complex sentence structure
- Use knowledge of punctuation to assist in comprehension
- Identify transitional words or phrases that make text cohesive (e.g., finally, in addition, and in contrast)
- Recognize the organizational format, such as hierarchical, chronological, and cause/effect
- Use strategies such as discussing with others, reading guides and summaries, and reading aloud to assist in comprehension
- Identify opportunities for improvement of reading comprehension skills; for example, exposure to seek a wider range of writers, topics, and styles
- Maintain a personal reading list to reflect reading accomplishments

Listening

- Listen respectfully and responsively
- Recognize the use and impact of effective language
- Demonstrate appropriate body language as a listener
- Identify own purpose for listening
- Recognize content-specific vocabulary, terminology, or jargon unique to particular groups of people

Speaking

- Respond respectfully
- Initiate communication with peers and adults in the school and local community
- Use a presentational format appropriate for the audience and purpose
- Use the conventions of standard spoken English appropriate to the message and audience

- Apply delivery techniques such as voice projection and demonstrate physical poise
- Use nonverbal communication techniques to help disclose message
- Use visual aids and props effectively
- Respond to the audience's reaction and adapt presentation
- Establish and maintain eye contact with audience

Writing

- Understand the purpose for writing; the purpose may be to explain, describe, narrate, persuade, or express feelings
- Identify the intended audience
- Use tone and language appropriate to the audience and purpose
- Use prewriting activities (e.g., brainstorming, free-writing, note taking, outlining, and paragraphing)
- Use the writing process (e.g., prewriting, drafting, revising, proofreading, and editing)
- Write clear, concise sentences
- Observe the rules of punctuation, capitalization, and spelling
 - o Punctuation of simple and compound sentences, dialogue, titles of articles
 - o Capitalization of words such as proper adjectives, titles of persons, and words in quotes
 - o Spelling of commonly misspelled words, homonyms, content-area vocabulary
 - o Use correct grammatical construction
 - o Parts of speech, such as nouns; adjectives and adverbs (comparative/superlative); pronouns (indefinite/nominative/objective); conjunctions (coordinating/subordinating); prepositions and prepositional phrases; interjections; and conjunctions to connect ideas
 - o Complete simple, compound, and complex sentences containing dependent clauses and using correct subject-verb agreement, correct verb tense, and pronouns with clear antecedents
- Use dictionaries, thesauruses, and style manuals
- Use an organizational format that provides direction, coherence, unity
- Use computer technology to create, manipulate, and edit text

ACTIVITY

- Choose one ELA Standard
- Write how a ThinkQuest project will support it.

DISCUSSION

Self-Assessment Strategies



mighty productions
new ideas

ThinkQuest International Competition 2011
ORACLE ThinkQuest

Welcome


**Welcome To The
Queens Office of Educational Technology**

Winnie Bracco
Technology Innovation Manager

Enhancing Education Through Technology (EETT)
Title IID Funded Program

Kelly Gallagher, Instructional Technology Specialist
Robert Sweeney, Instructional Technology Specialist

Enhancing Writing Instruction Through Technology (EWITT)
Training Provided by
Mickie Quinn of Mighty Productions



mighty productions
new ideas


ThinkQuest International Competition 2011
ORACLE ThinkQuest

Introduction

“Technology Infusion into Instruction through Professional Development”

An intensive professional development program that empowers educators to to engage students in interdisciplinary projects and improving writing and communication skills through the integration of technology into the ELA curriculum.

- Develop Effective Writing Techniques
- Ignite Critical Thinking
- Sharpen Problem-Solving Skills
- Practice Responsible Research
- Implement Real-World Technology
- Create a Media-Rich Educational Website



mighty productions
new ideas

ThinkQuest International Competition 2011
ORACLE ThinkQuest

Goals

Improve academic performance in ELA by infusing project-based technology into instruction

80% of target students will achieve at least one year of growth on their scale score of the NYS ELA exam

Multi-layered and sustained program of professional development will serve the needs of educators

ELL and Special Needs students will increase student achievement in the area of English Language Arts

Portfolio of student-created work



Goals

Have EWITT Represented
as
FINALISTS
in the
2011
ThinkQuest International
Digital Media
Competition



Results




By the end of the program, EWITT participants will...

- Be immersed in online resources such as Thinkfinity, NYS Virtual Learning space, and Web 2.0 tools
- Receive training on the software necessary to complete media-rich projects
- Incorporate the project-based learning process within their content area and use technology to enhance research and writing skills
- Develop an online environment to host all student work for a broader audience
- Collaborate within ARIS Connect as well as use a variety of virtual community tools, such as email, blogs, wikis, the web portal and synchronous communications



The Elements

- Teacher Workshops
- WikiSpaces
- Blog with student comment assignments
- Structured timeline for development of project
- Deadlines & accountability for progress points
- Open communication for questions and support
- Professional community to share progress, trials & tribulations, and celebrate the end results

Expectations




- Complete pre & post project surveys
- Collect & organize photo consent forms
- Create an example TQ site appropriate to theme & curriculum
- Submit at least FIVE projects to ThinkQuest competition by March 5, 2011
- Utilize blog & meet deadlines for student comments
- Complete all homework assignments
- Engage students in process through PBL methodology
- Turnkey training to school community





Project Elements

- Idea
- Research
- Develop Content
- Design Site
- Build Pages
- Add Media
- Polish
- Publish
- Celebrate

Student-Created Projects

<http://enhancingwriting.wikispaces.com/TQ+EWITT+Summer+Institute>

ACTIVITY: Use the "Evaluating Student-Created Projects" form to critique a past site. You will then present the site and your comments to the class.



Office of Educational Technology
ENHANCING • COLLABORATING • EMPOWERING




mighty
productions
rise above


**ThinkQuest
International
Competition
2011**
ORACLE ThinkQuest

The Competition

The ThinkQuest International Competition challenges students to **solve a REAL-WORLD problem** by applying their critical thinking, communication, and technology skills.



Office of Educational Technology
ENHANCING • COLLABORATING • EMPOWERING



mighty
productions
rise above

**ThinkQuest
International
Competition
2011**
ORACLE ThinkQuest

The Competition

Participants can produce any of the following:

Blog/journal
Website
Animation
Public Service Announcement
Photo Essay
Video
-or-
SOME COMBINATION OF THESE ITEMS!

Students must define the problem they intend to solve and produce an entry that presents their solution and the process followed to develop their solution.



Office of Educational Technology
ENHANCING • COLLABORATING • EMPOWERING



mighty
productions
rise above

**ThinkQuest
International
Competition
2011**
ORACLE ThinkQuest

The Competition

Go to: **ThinkQuest.org**
Click on:
"ThinkQuest International Challenge 2011"

Take a moment to read the rules & details.



Competition + Curriculum

ACTIVITY:
Tie Curricular Themes to Real-World Issues

1. Group Demonstration
2. Individual Practice
3. Discuss Process



Winner's Circle

How EWITT Will Dominate The Competition:

- »Structured Timeline
- »Group Deadlines
- »Push-In Support
- »Advanced Trainings
- »Pre-Judging
- »Time for Polishing



Questions- Time to Commit

Now is a good time to think about your school year, professional goals, all extra-curricular responsibilities and assess your ability to fully commit to the project.

- Ask training staff logistical questions
- Mark dates in your personal calendar
- Take note of dates for testing and other scheduling obstacles

Kelly Gallagher- kgallagher4@schools.nyc.gov
Robert Sweeney- rsweene@schools.nyc.gov
Winnie Bracco- wbracco@schools.nyc.gov



Office of Educational Technology
INNOVATE. COLLABORATE. IMPROVE.




mighty productions
rise above

ThinkQuest
International
Competition
2011


ORACLE ThinkQuest

Answers

Committed? Good!



Office of Educational Technology
INNOVATE. COLLABORATE. IMPROVE.



mighty productions
rise above


ThinkQuest
International
Competition
2011

ORACLE ThinkQuest


Project-Based Learning

PBL is central to your curriculum and guides students in:

- A self-driven inquiry towards solving a problem
- Answering questions
- Creating multi-disciplinary themes
- Meeting hands-on challenges



Office of Educational Technology
INNOVATE. COLLABORATE. IMPROVE.



mighty productions
rise above



ThinkQuest
International
Competition
2011

ORACLE ThinkQuest

Project-Based Learning

“Students are pulled through the curriculum by a meaningful question to explore, an engaging real-world problem to solve, or a design challenge to meet.”

- PBL Starter Kit Page 4
Buck Institute for Education



ThinkQuest International Competition 2011

Project-Based Learning

If PBL presents an answer to a central question, the first step should be to

CREATE THE QUESTION

ACTIVITY: Create a question to answer based on the IDEAS developed in the previous activity. Share with class.

ThinkQuest International Competition 2011

Project-Based Learning

- Practice PBL with small projects
- Train students to collaborate and share
- Promote a positive working environment

After a few practice runs, students will work independently, be resourceful, drive their own learning and reflect on the process.

ACTIVITY- Choose a Spotlight Project in *PBL Starter Kit*, pages 9-28. Briefly sketch a similar inquiry-based project for your students to complete as pairs. Include assessment ideas from Page 48. Share!




ThinkQuest International Competition 2011

Dreamweaver

Our entries this year will be based on a flexible template design. The template frees students to focus on original graphics and outstanding content.

ACTIVITY:


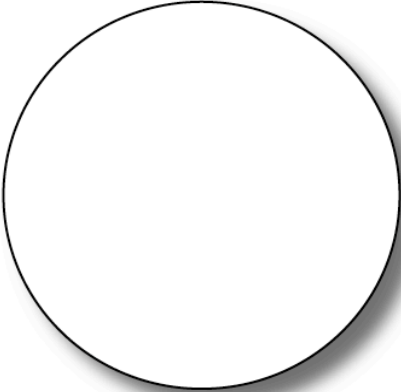


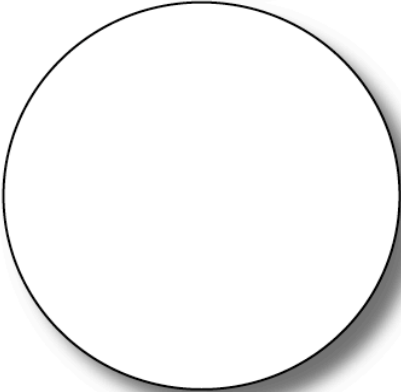


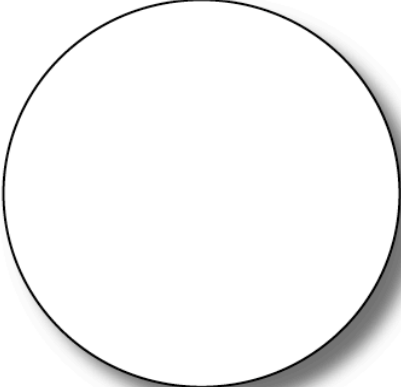



- Download template.html from WikiSpaces
- Right-click file > Save target...
- Save to folder on Desktop
- Launch Dreamweaver
- Open file
- Edit text styles, background, content area

Tying Curricular Themes To Real-World Issues

Step 1: Write down a list of THEMES that you are covering.

Step 2: Write down real-world ISSUES that affect you.

Step 3: Draw a line from any box in the theme column and any box in the issues column to connect to a circle. Explain in an IDEAS circle how examples from that theme can be used to help solve that problem.

THEMES	IDEAS	ISSUES
		
		
		
		



PROJECT-BASED LEARNING

While TQ is highly innovative, it is based on solid, proven educational principles. It is a prime example of project-based learning; it supports virtually any curriculum; it addresses and helps to reach educational standards; and it embraces a limitless range of interests and levels of sophistication. It is also great fun – for teachers and students alike – which explains its enormous popularity.

Learner-Centered Instruction

The learner-centered instruction perspective of teaching and learning makes the learner the focus of instructional planning, delivery, and benefits. In these ways students may participate in identifying learning goals, planning instructional milestones and deadlines, selecting instructional strategies, and shouldering responsibility for their performance.

In this process the teacher plays the essential roles of facilitator, expert, resource, and mentor. In a holistic view of this learner-centered emphasis one of the comprehensive outcomes can be the students' growing understanding and adoption of a lifelong learning perspective and skills. Rather than reinforcing reliance on an outside expert (teacher), these students build independence and accountability for their learning that can span contexts and many years to come.

Constructivism

During the engagement in problem-based learning students use a constructivist approach and exercise the development of learners' thinking skills. These skills include data gathering, analysis and synthesis to name a few.

A learner-centered environment that focuses on student problem-solving provides situated real-life opportunities to discover learning and knowledge with additional motivation and the benefit of a tangible, highly valued product, a website. Building on the high value placed on technology in our society today and our students' ever-increasing familiarity with and propensity for multimedia and Internet interaction, they can be cleverly engaged in active learning and critical thinking in ways they will both value and enjoy.

Identifying the ThinkQuest process incorporates research skills, analysis, and problem solving skills. Researching information includes planning, strategizing, data gathering, and analysis. Designing and developing the website takes problem solving and synthesis skills that can be pursued at different levels based on the interest and skills of the students. Very often teachers who lead ThinkQuest student projects recount that their students pursue and develop projects beyond what they expected possible.

Created by EWITT & Mighty Productions 2010. Cannot be reproduced without permission by Title IID.

For more information about constructivism's vital application to instructional technology we recommend Dr. Kathy P. King's, *Keeping Pace with Technology* and Jonassen's, *Computers as Mindtools* (2nd ed).

Project-Based Learning

Project-based learning (PBL) is an innovative model for classroom activity that engages students in their own learning. This is accomplished by giving students the responsibility to identify problems, develop solutions, conduct research on a question of interest, analyze data, synthesize and integrate information, and become active participants in their own learning process.

PBL is simply an extension of the tried and true philosophy that "we learn best by doing" and ThinkQuest epitomizes that philosophy.

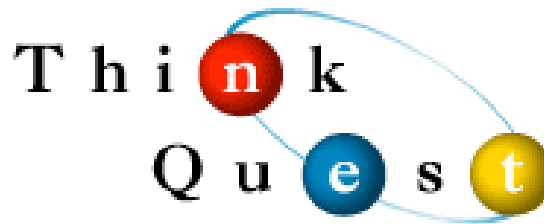
The Buck Institute for Education in Novato, CA, has shown that PBL...

- *Accommodates diverse approaches to learning.*
- *Prompts students to collaborate while at the same time supporting self-directed learning.*
- *Can give students a richer, more "authentic" learning experience than other learning modes because it occurs in a social context where interdependence and cooperation are crucial for getting things done.*
- *Promotes higher-order cognitive skills and problem-solving strategies.*
- *Can effectively accomplish goals that are difficult to achieve with other models of instruction, including group process skills, life skills, technology skills, decision-making skills, problem solving, and time management.*

Source: Buck Institute for Education

The role of the teacher is in no way diminished by PBL, however. On the contrary, it is vastly enhanced. At TQ, the role becomes one of a "guiding partner" to the student.

**For more information about project-based learning,
visit the Buck Institute's website at <http://www.bie.org>**



How to TQ- The Process

GET YOURSELF READY

You will find that many of the skills and talents needed to coach TQ teams are qualities you have already cultivated being an educator. This project requires some extra time for planning and organizing. With that extra time spent before the project begins, you'll have a successful experience.

First of all, let's define a successful experience. For you as a professional, the successes are immeasurable. You will be learning new technology skills, breaking the traditional classroom model to create a collaborative work environment, encouraging your students to complete a project, and you will have examples of student work to show off at the end of the year.

Organizing yourself early on will be extremely beneficial. Take the time to consider how this project will fit into your school day/after-school/weekend professional time. You do not need to be a web engineer to complete this project. Gather an overall understanding of the technology and the students will pursue the details.

Survey the resources available to you. Speak with your principal, computer coordinator, librarian and art teacher. Explain the project, the process and ask if they have any resources that might help (digital camera, scanner, software, video camera, etc.) Technology is not solely allocated to the computer lab! Work with your district support staff to see what is available.

People are resources too. Send notes home to the parents explaining the project along with the list of topics. Do the same for the teachers' lounge, the main office, and the library. You might have experts within your community. Experts can be either people to help with the construction of the site, or experts in the subject area the students are researching. The project can only have two co-coaches, but there is no limit to the amount of helpers you are allowed.

GET YOUR STUDENTS READY

Created by EWITT & Mighty Productions 2010. Cannot be reproduced without permission by Title IID.

It's not hard to get students excited about this project. The technology! The contest! Publishing content for the Web! Having a discussion about the various components of the project can help them begin to start formulating their plans.

Having students review past student created web sites is a great way to challenge them. Go to www.tqnyc.org/library and have them search for their favorite subjects to see what other students in New York City have created.

Providing project teams with a routine for each meeting will help them stay on track and work through the project to completion. Use your classroom management skills to have teams adhere to the best practices of daily documentation, saving files and backing up information (more on that later).

Coaches can encourage teams to maintain a project journal that includes:

- Team progress
- Plan for the next meeting
- Team member assignments or action list
- Documentation of file names
- Documentation of research materials for documentation

GET YOUR WORKSPACE READY

Take a tour of your school's computer lab. Work with the technology person and your principal to obtain a list of available hardware and software. Often times technology purchases are made at the end of the school year and forgotten about the next year. If you have computers in your own classroom or have access to a mobile lab, create a workspace conducive to group work. Will each student have a computer, or will there only be one per team? Think through the process and set up your space/s accordingly.

Not all parts of building a web site require the use of a computer. Research, writing, site/idea mapping, design ideas and team meetings can all be done on paper and require the team to meet as a group. If you're working in a computer lab, consider having days where you meet in another location or in a section of the room that has "meeting space" for the teams.

Decorate your workspace with computer shortcuts and tips. In the Preparation & Organization unit are rules for successful web building. If you can, have students create large posters to hang around the room for easy reference.

Use <http://netlingo.com/> for definitions of web and technology terms!

GET YOUR MATERIALS READY

It's helpful for each team to have a binder where all research, writing, tutorials and information is stored. This binder lives in the classroom. To help you manage each

Created by EWITT & Mighty Productions 2010. Cannot be reproduced without permission by Title IID.

team's progress, you can require teams to keep a log of what was accomplished each day, what questions arose, and what needs to be done during the next meeting.

Your own binder is helpful as well. Each week you can keep track of what was accomplished, keep your tutorials in one location; write down questions you need to find answers to... and the answers when you find them. When the year is over, you will have a great resource for a TQNYC curriculum for your school.

Backup. Backup. Backup. Look into digital storage options to save student work and backup on a regular basis. One place to backup would be your school's server. Work with your school's tech person for the best solution. Look to see what type of drives your computers have: floppy drives, Zip drives, CD Burners, etc. If your computers have USB ports, you can look into portable storage (i.e. Flash Drives, Thumb Drives, Mini Drives). These are small devices that can be plugged into any computer with a USB port. Whatever solution works for your lab, make sure to back up in two locations and have a routine for backing up.

ESTABLISH A PLAN

Project based learning requires a plan; students are less likely to do this on their own without your guidance and support. We offer considerations, ideas, as well as advice collected from past coaches.

Remember to consider your own time and space. There is no "right way" to complete a web site project, how you work with your students will depend on the hours of week you have with them, their ages, and the number of weeks you have to complete the project.

TIMELINE

On the following page you will find a timeline that includes important deadlines and space for you and your students to set dates for their own work. Start from the deadline and work backwards. Make sure you include time to deal with unexpected circumstances. Many coaches incorporate their own deadline for completing the project with their teams before ThinkQuest NYC's deadline. This will ensure that the teams have time to proofread and handle any last minute glitches that are bound to happen.

ADD TO TIMELINE/GRID

Feel free to add/change/switch this list around to your own needs. The wording can be changed for your specific students age and ability. Timeline on page 21.

- Topic Chosen
- Register Team
- Research Complete
- Site Map Created
- Content Written

Created by EWITT & Mighty Productions 2010. Cannot be reproduced without permission by Title IID.

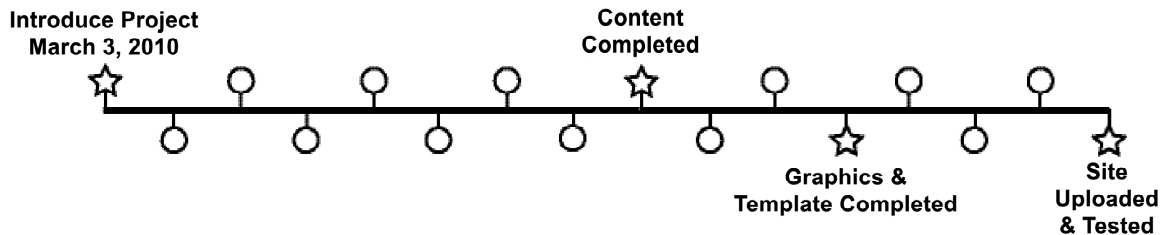
- Content Edited
- Content Re-written
- Ideas for Interactivity Submitted
- Images Created and Compiled
- Sample Site Designs Submitted
- Site Template Created
- Interactive Elements Created
- Site Built
- Interactive Elements Added
- Upload, Test and Fix until Done!

ASSIGNMENT & DEADLINE GRID

In addition to the main timeline, each team should have an assignment and deadline grid that is constantly updated and expanded as the project moves forward. The grid separates the task, the team member responsible for completing the task, and the deadline. Every team member needs a copy of the timeline and be aware of the interim deadlines along the way. It's the teams' project and their responsibility. Find a copy of this grid on page 23.



SAMPLE PROJECT TIMELINE





ASSIGNMENTS & DEADLINES

		Completed
		Completed
		Completed
		Completed
		Completed
		Completed
		Completed
		Completed

TEAM OR TOPIC FIRST

It's your decision whether to have students choose their team or topic first. You might divide students into teams and have them work through activities from Unit 3 to brainstorm for their topic idea. Or, as a class, they can develop topic ideas and then choose the project they wish to work on. Either way you choose, your guidance will be needed.

Some of the factors that might affect this decision are:

The size of the class: the larger the class, the more reason there is to choose the teams first, from the point of view of project management.

Your familiarity with the students: if you know their individual interests, it might be best to pick topics first and then form teams around them; conversely, if you can identify specific talents and skills, it could aid in putting the teams together and then helping them select the topics.

Adherence to curriculum content: if you plan to narrow the topic selection to closely adhere to the curriculum, it might be best to select the topics first; if linkage to specific curriculum content is less of a priority than, say, building research skills or social interaction, team selection might come first.

Appeal to different groupings: for example, friends might work together as a team to select a topic, or students with similar interests might work on a pre-selected topic.

CHOOSING A TOPIC

Your main goal in topic selection should be to focus the group on the process.

Some of the considerations here are:

The time available to work on the site: if this is a class-time project, it will probably be best to steer teams toward topics that are more curriculum-based. If it is an after-school activity, you might want to give students more freedom.

The number of teams the class is/will be broken into: you might prefer to have the whole class select a single, general topic, with each team choosing its own sub-topic or alternative approach. Or you might prefer to allow the students more latitude or diversity in topic selection, with each team developing a site around a subject of specific interest to them.

The grade level of the class: the teacher should guide the students away from tackling topics that are likely to be either too difficult – or too easy. ThinkQuest New York City is intended to be a challenging experience, so a “reach” is not inappropriate.

Created by EWITT & Mighty Productions 2010. Cannot be reproduced without permission by Title IID.

Certain student factors: special individual interests, prior knowledge, age appropriateness, etc.

Set a date when topic selection must be finalized, and make sure each team member knows that date.

If the teams have already been selected, allow students to switch teams after topic finalization, to accommodate any special interests. Topics might also change.

RESEARCH & CONTENT DEVELOPMENT

Gathering and managing the information should be completed in an orderly and timely fashion, using a variety of methods to carefully document all sources and resources: electronic bookmarking where possible; copy/pasting URL's into a Word document; having a diskette handy to store information and keeping a hard-copy notebook, etc.

Managing the information

Hard Copy

Get your students into a routine. If they find a source, develop a system where they write down all the information they need for the bibliography, plus whatever facts or ideas they extracted from that source. This will help if they (or another teammate) need to refer back to the original source.

Take a look at <http://citationmachine.net/> created by David Warlick at The Landmark Project it is a useful resource for creating proper citations. Unit 6 has additional advice and resources on this topic.

Digital Copy

When using websites as sources, it's often best to keep a digital version of the link where the web address or URL can easily be copied and pasted and not risk a 'misspelling' of the address. A couple of options for keeping track of URLs are:

Word processing document

Copy & paste web address (URL) into document, written in correct bibliographical style.

Portable Bookmarks

Use PortaPortal.com for access to websites from any computer. This web-based system makes it easy for you and your students to have access to the same links and access them from any computer, anywhere.

Even with a digital system for storing, it is important for students to also keep track of all the information they will need for their bibliography. A web address alone is not enough information for the bibliography. Be sure to instill a system for keeping track of all of the information needed to create the bibliography in the end.

CITATIONS & PERMISSIONS

Any element or idea that did not come directly from the students needs to be:

1. Assured that the students have permission to use it, and
2. Clearly cited in the bibliography

How do you know if you have permission to use things?

Print Materials

In printed materials you might find in the front near the publishing information the following statement “No part of this may be reprinted without permission...” and the address to obtain the permission. Some print materials allow for the use of reprinting for educational purposes.

The bigger issue with citing text is ideas and data. These are items that do not require permission, but do require citations. Students should be taught to make clear notes with every resource they use; and to record data in simple terms with clear notations of where the information was found.

Websites

Many web sites will include a link to “Terms of Use” or “Terms & Conditions” on either their homepage or in the “About Us” section. This is where you can find the information on “usage”. It should indicate what process is required to obtain permission to use their original content (photos, graphics, videos, interviews, music, etc.)

Some websites are geared towards helping students and educators:

- <http://encarta.com>: includes a “How to Cite This Article” at the bottom of each entry.
- <http://pics4learning.com>: Permission to use all images and provides citation information for bibliography

Create Original Graphics, Photos, Videos, Animations, etc!

Students should be encouraged to create as much original content as possible for their web site projects. It’s more fun, more creative and they will have their personal stamp their site. Teams can recruit the class artist to provide art for their site too. Treat student creators like any other author and be sure to provide citations for student-created work. Who wouldn’t want credit for their drawings, animations or musical compositions?

Organize Citations by Page

While not required, it is a nice touch to organize bibliography by page. It helps judges verify sources. It demonstrates organization and understanding of citations.

PROCESS FOR PRODUCTION

Tutorials

Decide before the production stage begins which software your students will use. Find tutorials on the software and become familiar with its basic tools, functions and saving methods. Introduce these basics to your students in a simple step-by-step tutorial. Then, allow them to play, explore and ask questions. It is often times easier to learn software when there is a specific task that needs to be accomplished. Have your students practice building web sites, creating and adding graphics, and uploading. By creating practice sites, students will be able to ask and answer questions in a less stressful environment than it would be if they waited until closer to the deadline to begin learning and testing the technology. As coach, you can modify software tutorials to create specific projects with details that relate to your specific computer set-up.

Students will quickly become 'experts' on the software being used. Take advantage of their skills, enthusiasm and willingness to teach their peers. There is no need for you to be the expert on every step of this process.

As coach, you can help students learn how to find answers to questions you cannot immediately help them with. Use these opportunities as a learning experience for both of you. Leave plenty of time for trial and error. Discover problems early in the process rather than towards the deadline.